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SUBJECT: LIMITED CABINET RESHUFFLE BRINGS IN THREE  
TECHNOCRATS

REF: A. AMMAN 3557  
[B](#). AMMAN 3215  
[C](#). 06 AMMAN 8572

[1](#). (U) As expected, Prime Minister Marouf Bakhit announced September 2 the names of three ministers to replace vacancies left by recent resignations (reftels). All three new ministers are considered technocrats by observers: the new Minister of Finance was promoted from Secretary General (the number two position), while the new Minister of Health and Minister of Water and Irrigation arrive with strong academic backgrounds in their respective fields.

[2](#). (SBU) This announcement should bring to an end public speculation about the near-term future of the Bakhit government (originally named in November 2005, with a minor cabinet reshuffle made in November 2006 (ref C)). By limiting the reshuffle to the appointment of these three technocrats to fill the vacant ministries, the Government has likely signaled that it will remain in place until the November parliamentary elections.

3.(SBU/NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION OUTSIDE USG) Minister of Finance  
- Dr. Hamad Kasasbeh

Kasasbeh is a Muslim East Banker, born in Karak in 1956. He earned a BA (1980) in Economics and a Masters in Statistics (1983) from the University of Jordan. He has a PhD in Economics from Colombia University (1990). Kasasbeh worked as an economic researcher and advisor at the Central Bank from 1980-1996. He was appointed General Manager of the Municipal Development Bank and served there until 1999. Kasasbeh authored 14 publications in the field of finance and taught at the University of Jordan. He was Secretary General of the Auditing Bureau from 1999 until 2003. In 2003 he was assigned Secretary General of the Ministry of Finance. Kasasbeh favors elimination of Jordan's subsidy programs, especially the fuel subsidy which led to his predecessor's resignation (ref A).

[4](#). (SBU/NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION OUTSIDE USG) Minister of Health  
- Dr. Salah Mawajdeh

Dr. Mawajdeh is a Muslim East Banker, born in Amman in 1957. He studied medicine at the University of Jordan and later received his masters and doctorate degrees in Health Policy and Management from Johns Hopkins University. Mawajdeh has worked in several roles in the health sector since 1983. He published more than 20 scientific and books and papers and participated in numerous seminars worldwide. In 1994, he was awarded the WHO Gender and Tropical Diseases Award for his paper, "The Assessment of the Quality of Parental Care in Irbid, North Jordan: Women's Perspective." Mawajdeh served as Director of the Jordan Food and Drug Administration and as

Regional Coordinator of the Reproductive Health Working Group  
in the Population Council in Cairo.

15. (SBU/NOT FOR DISTRIBUTION OUTSIDE USG) Minister of Water  
and Irrigation - Dr. Mohammad Shatnawi

Dr. Shatnawi is a Muslim East Banker born in Irbid in 1945.  
He earned a PhD in Civil Engineering from the University of  
California, majoring in hydraulics with minors in irrigation  
and engineering analysis. Shatnawi headed the Department of  
Soils and Irrigation and taught water resources and  
i-T'lHhkm#QHity of Jordan. He has served as  
Dean of the Agriculture Faculty. He has 25 years experience  
in water resources management, water and agriculture policy,  
irrigation systems design, hydrology of arid areas and  
environmental impact of water and irrigation projects. He  
worked for FAO in Egypt as an expert on water and irrigation  
(1989-1991).

Rubinstein